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Letter dated 10 January 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Mauritius to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am enclosing herewith a copy of the document entitled "Guidelines for the Public Meeting on the situation in Africa" which will serve as an orientation paper for the Public Meeting of the Security Council on 29 January 2002.

I would be grateful if this could be circulated as a document of the Security Council (see annex).

(*Signed*) Jagdish **Koonjul**
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Annex to the letter dated 10 January 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Mauritius to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The United Nations, through the Security Council, devotes much of its time both at informal consultations and formal meetings in addressing conflict situations in Africa. Likewise, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), through its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, plays an active role in addressing African conflicts. Since both organizations aim at finding solutions to disputes/conflicts, it is of vital importance that their actions complement one another for effective results. It is in this context that close cooperation between the Security Council and the OAU is of immense value.

The Security Council has been dealing with almost all the conflict situations in Africa. However, it is most unfortunate that we are not getting the desired overall results. We therefore propose to revisit these issues in the presence of the OAU Secretary General, who is expected to give an African perspective to the whole issue.

I. Objectives

Our objectives are to refocus attention on Africa and to take stock of developments and shortcomings, if any, through a series of questions. We hope that some of the answers may help to devise a proactive approach for a continent riddled by conflicts and that still needs considerable attention from the international community. We would wish to work out a workable set of recommendations. It is also our hope that the participation of the Secretary General of the OAU in the Security Council meeting on the "Situation in Africa" will lay down the basis for future dialogue between the Security Council and the OAU.

II. Conflict situations

For what reasons does the African continent continue to be afflicted by conflicts? Why are the responses of the international community, including the Security Council, in addressing those conflicts so slow? Does the present level of engagement of the Security Council, with regard to African issues, match the complexity of the situations?

What has been the international community's response to intra-State instability and other conflicts in Africa and what actions have been taken to prevent such outbreaks?

To what extent has there been agreement and cooperation between the United Nations and the rest of the international community in the field of conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building and what has been done in both instances to determine the adequacy of what has been accomplished and what needs further to be done?

To what extent has the international community, and the United Nations in particular, provided protection for children in conflict situations in Africa? To what extent has the international community, and the United Nations in particular, provided support to the growing role of women in conflict prevention, peacemaking and post-conflict peace-building in Africa? What can the United Nations and the

Security Council in particular do to curb the activities of mercenaries in conflict situations in Africa? How could the United Nations contribute to the effective implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes as a vital component of post-conflict peace-building?

How far has the United Nations Security Council joined up with other United Nations agencies and the international community in the field of post-conflict peace-building?

At the Algiers Summit in 1999, the OAU took the decision for the non-recognition of Governments that come to power through unconstitutional means. How could this new political culture be strengthened and how could the principles of democracy, good governance and the rule of law be promoted as preventive measures against instability and any potential outbreak of conflicts?

III. United Nations/Organization of African Unity cooperation

Is there any difference in perception and assessment by the Security Council and the OAU on conflicts in Africa? How could the United Nations and the OAU cooperate in their peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts in Africa for improved results? How could the central organ of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution and the Security Council coordinate their efforts for better results, in addressing conflicts in Africa?

Has the United Nations taken stock of its successes and failures in Africa, and to what extent can these lessons guide us for the future?

What efforts have been made to enhance Africa's peacekeeping capacity, greater African participation in United Nations standby arrangements and closer cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU?

IV. Role of subregional organizations

To what extent has the international community provided support to regional and subregional initiatives with regard to resolution of conflicts in Africa?

It has been noted that subregional organizations are good at "managing" conflicts but not at preventing or resolving them. The role of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in some of the conflict situations in West Africa and that of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in the Horn are often cited in this connection. How can we enhance the capacities of key subregional organizations such as ECOWAS, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and IGAD to participate in preventing and resolving conflicts in their respective regions?

Has the United Nations played its role in supporting the regional initiatives, especially when the Security Council's authorization is required prior to peacekeeping operations? How far has the Council been monitoring these activities?

V. Mediation efforts

What have been the contributions of Special Mediators or Special Commissions in assessing the sources of conflicts in Africa? How could their roles be enhanced? How can the work of Special Envoys and Special Representatives lead to better results in Africa?

How far has the United Nations been associated in the establishment of contact groups of interested parties either in the form of Groups of Friends or in the form of special conferences with regard to conflict situations in Africa?

The involvement of Eminent Personalities (both current and retired Statesmen) in Africa has helped to achieve progress in addressing conflicts in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Ethiopia/Eritrea. How could a pool of such Eminent Personalities be used to act as Emissaries of Peace in Africa?

VI. Sanctions/embargoes

The Secretary-General has, in his report entitled "The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa" (A/52/871-S/1998/318) highlighted the importance of sanctions, as preventive or coercive measures, either in the form of economic isolation or the imposition of arms embargoes. How effective has this course of action been and to what extent have sanctions served their purpose. To what extent does the Security Council consult with and heed the advice of subregional organizations prior to the imposition of sanctions on countries, groups or individuals from any subregion?

VII. Small arms and light weapons and illegal exploitation of natural resources

To what extent has the international community been involved in combating the proliferation and illicit flow of small arms which are fuelling conflicts in Africa? What are the requirements to have a successful and irreversible disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration and resettlement (DDRRR) programme in African conflicts?

How could the illegal exploitation of resources, which are fuelling conflicts in several parts of Africa, be stopped?

VIII. Humanitarian issues

What has been achieved in respect of ensuring the safety and security of civilians during armed conflicts in Africa?

Have humanitarian issues been given the required attention while addressing conflicts in Africa, particularly with respect to recovery and reconstruction? How could the United Nations assist the OAU in addressing the problem/issue of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs)?

How far has the Security Council been successful in holding combatants liable under international law in situations where civilians, particularly women and children, are the deliberate targets of aggression?

IX. The African Union and NEPAD

We are presently fully engaged in an era of globalization. The OAU is undergoing major transformations such as its transition into the African Union and the implementation of its New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) with a view to integrating Africa into the globalization process.

In addition to inherent structural constraints of Africa (poverty, debt, etc.) and the recurrent conflicts in Africa, the threat posed by the HIV/AIDS pandemic threatens the very existence of the African population. In this respect, how could the

United Nations become Africa's advocate for poverty alleviation through outright debt forgiveness and for the eradication of the HIV/AIDS pandemic? In general, what is being done by the United Nations to ensure that Africa is not marginalized in the globalization process?